



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS
VALSTYBINĖ MAISTO IR VETERINARIJOS TARNYBA
STATE FOOD AND VETERINARY SERVICE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

To: US Department of Agriculture, APHIS
Dr. Alfonso Tores
Deputy Administrator Veterinary Services
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 2050
USA

2001-08-28 No. 01-12-1531
Your ref: 2001-06-13 No.

Subject: Recognition of the Republic of Lithuania FMD free

Dear Dr. Alfonso Tores

In response to your letter of 13 July we are glad to send the requested information. We appreciate very much your request for additional information.

For the export of some milk products to the USA the exporting country has to be recognised as FMD free by the USA authorities.

At the moment we want to export ice-cream and in accordance with your legislation for that the exporting country has to be recognised as FMD free country.

In addition to the information, you already received by us we are sending the following information:

Enclosure:

- answers to your requested 11 topics, 5 pages,
- Law on Veterinary Activities, 9 pages,
- Veterinary Requirements of the Republic of Lithuania, 27 pages,
- Map of border inspection posts, 1 page,
- Map of number of bovine animals in Lithuania, 1 page,
- Map of number of cows in Lithuania, 1 page,
- Map of farms and bovine animals by size of herd in Lithuania, 1 page,
- Map of border inspection posts in Lithuania, 1 page,
- Foot and Mouth disease contingency plan for Lithuania, 70 pages.

We are looking forward to work out this recognition. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Deputy Director

J. Burokas

Usda0821

Siesikų Str. 19
LT-2010 Vilnius
LITHUANIA

Telephones: +3702 404361, 404363, 404364
Fax +3702 404362

E-mail vvt@vet.lt
<http://www.vet.lt>

004011018-4

TOPIC 1

The Law on Veterinary Activities, orders by the State Food and Veterinary Service and the Law on Civil Security define the work on FMD. All measures are taken under supervision of the European Commission and in accordance with OIE and EC requirements.

In Lithuania, FMD surveillance and control is organized and controlled by the State Food and Veterinary Service. Private and state veterinarians attend continuing training for FMD once a year and take part in field exercises of FMD.

The detailed information about roles, responsibilities, and legislation is presented in the attached Contingency Plan for Foot and Mouth disease for Lithuania. This plan has been prepared under supervision of experts of EC and approved by EC.

Swill feeding is prohibited in Lithuania. The control is carried out by the State Food and Veterinary Service.

TOPIC 2

FMD was registered in Lithuania in 1954, 1963, 1972. The last case was in 1982. In year 1982 the "O" type virus FMD was prevalent.

The infected animals were destroyed and all others were vaccinated. For the detection serology test was used, which was performed by the Institute in Vladimir (Russia). In the past this was the only method to diagnose FMD.

The countryside in Lithuania is flat and low. Several of the rivers crossing the country are quite large.

The land use: arable land 49.1%, meadows and pastures 22.2%, forest and woodland 16.3%, other 12.4%.

TOPIC 3

The Republic of Belarus and the Kaliningrad Region of Russia are free of FMD. Since 1982 there have been no cases of FMD in the regions adjacent to Lithuania. The FMD virus type was "O".

The regions adjacent to Lithuania have no special geographic or environmental characteristics. The countryside and environment is similar to that of Lithuania.

Veterinarians from the countries bordering Lithuania come to the meetings at least once a year and discuss, among other things, possibilities of better collaboration and activities in different situations related to FMD.

TOPIC 4

You will find the newest information about contingency measures, requirements for prophylactics and diagnostics of FMD in the attached contingency plan for FMD for Lithuania. All the instructions and measures of interest to you, are included in the FMD contingency plan.

TOPIC 5

Other species were not vaccinated and cattle vaccination ended in May 1995.

TOPIC 6

We have never detected any FMD in free-ranging species. We don't think it could be a reason for transmission, because the bordering countries are free of FMD. The wild animals susceptible to FMD are wild boars, deer and roes.

TOPIC 7

Please find attached the Veterinary Requirements of the Republic of Lithuania for the Import, Export, Transit of Livestock, Poultry, Animal Products, Raw Materials, Feedstuffs.

The import of products from other countries is held under strict control. Products of animal origin and animals – potential carriers of FMD virus are imported mainly from the EU countries. The information about FMD status of such countries is taken from the OIE database. The consideration about the level of FMD risk is done in accordance with the information from OIE database. In case of suspicion of FMD all imports are stopped until the situation is cleared. Our restrictions are often more strict than in the EU countries.

Like in the EU countries, the control on border inspection posts is carried out in accordance with the EU legislation. Animals may be imported into the country only after quarantine (OIE and EU requirements). No lack of veterinary inspection at the border inspection posts is ever possible.

In case of occurrence or suspicion of FMD in Europe or neighboring countries, about 80% of travelers are inspected for possible possession of illegal agricultural products at border control points. Normally about 15% of travelers are checked.

Amounts of imported meat and meat products in the year 2000 (in tons):

Country	Beef	Pork	Poultry	Variety meat
Denmark	-	175	4826	1102
Estonia	-	2757	862	348
Finland	-	-	258	868
Netherlands	-	266	2598	764
France	-	23	319	191
Germany	-	450	63	1020
Poland	108	437	76	27
Sweden	18	-	69	41
Hungary	-	40	20	86
Latvia	-	-	75	-
Spain	-	-	-	90
Total	126	4148	9166	4537

Please find attached a map with border inspection posts. All control is financed by the state and is carried out by the state institutions. At the BIP's in Klaipeda there are 39 employees (34 veterinarians), Kaunas - 7 veterinarians, Šiauliai 5-veterinarians, Lavoriskiu-Adutiskio - 6 veterinarians, Druskininku - 5 veterinarians; Vilniaus Vaidotu, Kenos railway and post inspection - 8 veterinarians, Kybartu - 9 veterinarians, Kalvarijos - 9 veterinarians, Kalviu - 6 veterinarians, Lazdiju - 3 veterinarians, Medininku - 5 veterinarians, Panemunes-Pagegiu - 6 veterinarians, Salociu - 6 veterinarians, Skersbalio disinfection station - 1 veterinarian, Salcininku - 6 veterinarians, International Vilnius Airport - 5 veterinarians, Zarasu-Obeliu- 6 veterinarians, Kursiu - 6 veterinarians.

In case of FMD in neighboring countries, we are informed directly by the Veterinary Service of the country and the OIE informs us immediately as well. Transit and movement of animals is stopped in any suspicion of FMD, until the situation is cleared out and suspicion confirmed or not by the officials of the country.

All testing and quarantine for imported animals is carried out in accordance with OIE and EC requirements.

TOPIC 8

Geographic distribution of animal population is attached in the map. The animal are distributed trough all country and the products would be exported from the whole country. Animal transportation and handling is done in accordance with EC directives.

The Law on Veterinary Activities (article No 16¹ "Animal registration and Identification" adopted 07 10 1999) provides for compulsory registration of animal holdings and obligatory identification of bovine, porcine, ovine and caprine animals. The Article 16¹ is a sub-Article No 16 "Measures of the Prevention of Contagious Animal Diseases, Eradication of Focuses of such Diseases and Epizootic".

Order No 380 adopted by the Minister of Agriculture (MoA, SFVS 1999 10 05) provides for the detailed requirements of identification of bovine animals. The bovine AID, HR and MC system is fully implemented and operational. The information concerning birth, movements and death of bovine animals has to be recorded and transferred to the CDB within 7 days after the event.

The bovine AID system implemented is the only permitted and unique system for all cattle kept within the country.

The accompanying obligatory document to all animal movements is Animal Health Certificate. The notification of animal movement is the mandatory procedure for all animal keepers, including animal sender and receiver.

On 1 July 2001, the Central Data Base included 240623 cattle keepers, 809320 cattle, 465968 cows.

Implementation of sheep and goat ID system. During the year 2001 (3-4 quarter) the holdings and keepers of sheep and goats are going to be introduced in to the single CDB of AID system. The sheep and goats will be eartagged and identified with the unique individual identification number and introduced in to the CDB.

Each keeper of cattle, pigs, sheep and goats, in accordance with the procedure established by authorized institution (Order No 380 adopted by the Minister of Agriculture (MoA, SFVS 1999 10 05)) is responsible for holding of animal register at a farm and each animal keeper is responsible for ear-tagging of the animals, regular notification on the change in the number and movement of animals to the local SFVS.

Each animal movement have to be accompanied by Animal Health Certificate (Form No 11). Animal movement without Animal Health Certificate is prohibited.

According to the Order No 380 adopted by the Minister of Agriculture (1999 10 05) animals imported from the countries – non EU members shall be applied new ear tags according to the procedure established by the Republic of Lithuania. The information on the former identification numbers of bovine animals shall be kept at the CDB; bovines imported from EU countries and the associated countries before 31 December, 1999, shall be applied new ear tags according to the established procedure by the Republic of Lithuania. After 1 January, 2000, the original number shall remain valid.

We suppose, that the livestock population in the coming years will not change very much.

TOPIC 9

The amendment is included in the Law on Veterinary Activities (attached). You will find detailed information about FMD sampling, reporting procedure, in the attached FMD contingency plan.

Lithuania performs monitoring of FMD through the examination of blood serum of wild and domestic animals in the National Veterinary Laboratory of Lithuania. State inspectors take samples in accordance with Order of State Food and Veterinary Service No.1-18 dated 18 November 1998. Inspector of county State Food and Veterinary Service fills out a sampling protocol, which is delivered to the laboratory together with the samples. Basing on sampling protocols statistical data concerning the examined animals, their number in counties, are collected. According to these data the sampling program in counties is managed. Surveillance programs are passive.

Investigation of FMD in 2000

	Wild boars	Elks	Deer	Roes	Cattle	Pigs
Samples of blood serum	41	18	35	106	481	264

Laboratory tests are required for suspected animals. Samples are analyzed by means of ELISA tests. To date, no samples for confirmation of clinical cases have been received.

National Veterinary laboratory carries out surveillance of wildlife in the regions through the analysis of blood serum of hunted wild game. Analyses are performed using ELISA tests. The samples are accepted together with sampling protocols. Test results of samples are reported to the concerned county State Food and Veterinary Service. We have never detected any FMD cases in free-ranging species.

TOPIC 10

Tests for List A diseases and FMD are performed in the Department of Virology of National Veterinary Laboratory of Lithuania. The National Veterinary Laboratory is able to carry out about 3000 analyses of FMD per month by means of serological methods. FMD is detected by ELISA tests.

The National Veterinary Laboratory is approved to conduct serology investigation. The State Food and Veterinary Service granted this approval on 1 July 2000 by Order No.171 (chapter 2 point 33). In cases of positive or suspicious results of the analysis, samples for isolation of FMD virus, identification, type, and characteristics of the pathogeny of the virus, will be sent to the Institute for Animal Health, the World Reference Laboratory in Pirbright, U.K. In case of positive test results the way of dealing is provided in the contingency plan.

At present the Department of Virology of National Veterinary Laboratory is doing the work required to achieve the third biosecurity level, i.e. modernizing system of ventilation (installation of hepa filters, etc.), purchasing necessary equipment, limiting the admission of people into the department. Adequate sanitation system has been put in place. Staff of the department has been trained to work with FMD and other virus abroad. Also, continuous participation in the trainings at the World Reference Laboratory in U.K is planned.

TOPIC 11

VetLexŽ - the concept. Since the 1960s, the European Union has significantly harmonized its Veterinary legislation creating and enacting over 5000 directives, regulations and decisions. More information about VETLEX can be found: <http://www.vetlex.com>.

You will find information about the identification of outbreaks, identification, suspicion or confirmation of FMD in FMD contingency plan. Rules, regulations or orders are issued by the State Food and Veterinary Service, Ministry of Agriculture. The information about FMD case or suspicion is transferred within 24h to the community, OIE, the neighboring countries. You will find the information about stopping of exports upon the occurrence of FMD in the contingency plan.